



U.S. Department of Energy Oak Ridge Operations Equal Employment Opportunity Counselors

POLICY

Oak Ridge is fully committed to affirmative employment, equal employment opportunity, and providing a nondiscriminatory workplace. ORO strives to fulfill its mission in a work environment free from acts of discrimination or harassment based on race, gender, age, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, religion, or reprisal.

In addition, the ORO Harassment Free Workplace policy prohibits all harassing behavior, i.e., political beliefs, marital status, veteran status, and union membership. All harassment issues covered by the Harassment Free Workplace Policy may be brought to the attention of an EEO Counselor, and pursued through the counseling process for informal resolution. Individuals are cautioned that these additional bases may not be covered under the purview of federal EEO laws and regulations.

INDIVIDUAL COMPLAINTS

Employees, former employees, or applicants who feel they are being discriminated against any on one or more of the non-merit factors of race, gender, age (40+), national origin, physical or mental disability, religion, sexual orientation, or reprisal may contact an EEO Counselor for counseling. EEO counseling is required before a formal complaint can be filed. The procedure is as follows:

- The individual must contact an EEO Counselor within 45 calendar days of the effective date for an alleged discriminatory action or event; or from the date when he individual first becomes aware of the alleged discrimination.
- The EEO Counselor then has 30 days to attempt to informally resolve the issue(s). This period of counseling can be extended to no more than 90 calendar days with a written request from the individual and agreement from the Diversity Programs Office.
- If the individual wishes to participate in an alternative dispute resolution procedure (such as mediation), the individual and ORO management can agree to extend the counseling period to no longer than 90 calendar days.
- If the issue(s) are unresolved at the end of counseling, the individual has 15 calendar days to file a formal complaint.
- If the formal complaint is accepted, the Department of Energy is required to investigate the formal complaint and provide a copy of the investigate file to the individual within 180 calendar days of the filing, unless the parties agree to an extension.

CONFIDENTIALITY

An individual may obtain counseling on a confidential basis and remain anonymous to other parties by advising the EEO Counselor of their request. The EEO Counselor will not make inquiries of third parties nor review documents unless authorized by the individual in writing. Anonymity is not possible after a formal complaint of discrimination is filed.

RETALIATION/REPRISAL

Under federal regulations, complaints, their representatives and witnesses are to remain free from restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal at any stage in the presentation or processing of a complaint, including the counseling stage and any time thereafter. Protected activities may include the filing of formal complaints; informal protests of discriminatory employment practices, including making complaints to management; writing critical letters, and expressing support of co-workers who have filed formal charges.

CLASS COMPLAINTS

Class complaints may be filed by persons believing they and other members of their class have been victims of discrimination. A class is a group of employees, former employees, and/or applicants who allegedly have been, or are being, adversely affected by an agency personnel management policy or practice which discriminates against the group on the basis of a common non-merit factor of race, gender, age (40+), national origin, physical or mental disability, religion, sexual orientation, or reprisal. A class complaint representative must contact the ORO Diversity Programs Manager at the address listed below within 45 calendar days of the date of the alleged discrimination or when they first became aware of the action.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For further information or to initiate EEO counseling, contact an EEO Counselor. For further information about the DOE/ORO Diversity Programs Office, visit the web site:
<http://www.oro.doe.gov/diversity/diversity.html>



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For further information concerning the DOE/ORO EEO Program contact:
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